

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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INFO AMEMBASSY CAPETOWN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABARONE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OAU PORG RH WA
SUBJ: OAU AND ZIMBABWE

REF: ADDIS ABABA 0122

SUMMARY: OAU ASST SECGEN FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS PETER ONU, INDICATED OAU LIBERATION COMMITTEE WOULD ENDORSE DECISION BY FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS TO SUPPORT PATRIOTIC FRONT. NU DOWNPLAYED BISHOP MUZOREWA'S POLITICAL STRENGTH, AND STATED MUZOREWA NOW "TEAMED UP WITH ENEMY". ONU NOTED THAT DOOR STILL OPEN, HOWEVER, FOR MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE TO JOIN PATRIOTIC FRONT. HE EXPRESSED VIEW USG SHOULD PUSH UK TO DO MORE TO SOLVE ZIMBABWE PROBLEM AND US SHOULD CONSIDER SECOND, INDEPENDENT INITIATIVE ON ZIMBABWE.
END SUMMARY.

1. IN COURSE OF TOUR D'HORIZON WITH EMBOFFW, OAU ASST SECGEN
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FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS PETER ONU COMMENTED ON BOTH RECENT RECOGNITION OF PATRIOTIC FRONT BY FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS AND POWER STRUGGLE AMONG LEADERSHIP VARIOUS ZIMBABWE POLITICAL GROUPINGS. ONU INDICATED OAU LIBERATION COMMITTEE WOULD ENDORSE DECISION BY FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS TO SUPPORT PATRIOTIC FRONT DURING ITS LUSAKA MEETING JANUARY 29-FEBRUARY 3. HE SAID BISHOP MUZOREWA HAD "TEAMED UP WITH ENEMY". MOREOVER, NKOMO HAD BOTH AN ARMY,

AND A POLITICAL MACHINE AND ROBERT MUGABE HAD AN
AN ARMY, WHEREAS NEITHER SITHOLE OR MUZOREWA HAD TROOPS IN FIELD.

2. TURNING TO THE RISE OF MUZOREWA, ONU STATE MUZOREWA HAD BEEN INVITED INTO ZIMBABWE POLITICS BY HOSHUA NKOMO AT TIME OF PEARCE COMMISSION. NKOMO WAS THEN IN PRISON. MOZOREQA ACCEPTED NKOMO'S OFFER AND PEARCE COMMISSION'S REPORT WAS THROWN OUT. STATING THAT MUZOREWA HAD KEPT THE ANC RUNNING WHILE OTHER LEADERSHIP IN PRISON AND HAD APPARENTLY FOUND POWER TO HIS LIKING. ONU NOTED THAT MUZOREWA HAD BEEN GIVEN LEADERSHIP ON BASIS OF PROMISE THAT HE WOULD CALL FOR CONFERENCE AND ELECTIONS WITHIN 4 MONTHS OF RELEASE OF LEADERSHIP. MUZOREWA HAD NOT DONE SO, AND IN HIS ABSENCE NKOMO HAD CALLED CONFERENCE AND WAS ELECTED. MUZOREWA HAD ALLEGEDLY OPPOSED CONFERENCE ON GROUNDS THAT TIMING INOPPORTUNE. ONU ALSO DISCOUNTED MUZOREWA'S PERSONAL POWER BASE, INDICATING THAT DEMONSTRATIONS IN SUPPORT OF BISHOP WERE REFLECTION HIS POSITION RELIGIOUS LEADER, RATHER THAN POLITICAL BACKING. ONU CLOSED BY NOTING ZANU AND ZAPU WERE LONG, ESTABLISHED BODIES, AND THAT STRUGGLE.

3. TURNING TO LUSAKA MEETING, NOU STATED THAT OAU WOULD GET FULL INFORMATION ON MUZOREWA, AS WELL AS REASON FOR DECISION BY FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS. HE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT DOOR WAS STILL OPEN, HOWEVER, FOR MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE TO JOIN PATRIOTIC FRONT. ONU NOTED SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ANGOLA AND ZIMBABWE, AND MISTAKES MADE IN HANDLING ANGOLA SITUATION, WHICH OAU DID NOT WISH REPEAT.

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4. ASKED IF OAU UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT PRESENT SITUATION WHERE FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS ACTING FOR ENTIRE OAU MEMBERSHIP WITHOUT CLEAR AUTHORIZATION AND PERHAPS CONTRARY TO PAST DECISIONS OF OAU MINISTERIAL, ONU INDICATED NO REAL PROBLEMS EXISTED. "MAJORITY OF OAU MEMBERSHIP" ACCEPTED DECISION OF FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS. IN ADDITION, PAST DECISION TO SUPPORT SEVERAL LIBERATION FRONTS HAD BEEN MADE AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL, AND IT CLEAR "PRESIDENTS" COULD OVERRULE "MINISTERS".

5. TURNING TO SUBJECT OF MAJORITY RULE, ONU NOTED THAT OAU KNEW ANDREW YONG VERY WELL AND FAVORABLY. HE HOPED US WOULD AGAIN START BALL ROLLING IN ZIMBABWE AND CARRY POSITION OF USG SUPPORT FOR MAJORITY RULE TO ITS LOGICAL CONCLUSION. IN HIS VIEW, USG SHOULD PUSH BRITAIN TO DO MORE, NOTING THAT IF US INTERESTED IN PROTECTION OF MINORITY RIGHTS, IT HAD TO REALIZE THAT THOSE RIGHTS COULD ONLY BE PROTECTED BY PEACEFUL TRANSITION OF POWER. NOTING IAN SMITH'S OBJECTION TO GREATER BRITISH INVOLVEMENT, ONU DICTATED HIS VIEW THAT SMITH MORE INTERESTED IN PRESERVING HIS OWN POLITICAL POWER THAN PROTECTING WHITE

COMMUNITY IN RHODESIA. ONU STATED THAT US SHOULD DO SOMETHING SEPARATE FROM IVOR RICHARD'S EFFORT AND THAT RICHARD "TALKED TOO MUCH". IN THIS CONTEXT, ONU NOTED THAT IN CONTRAST TO U.S., BRITAIN DID NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT INFLUENCE OVER VORSTER AND SOUTH AFRICA.

6. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION FROM EMBOFF ABOUT POSSIBLE REASONS FOR RECENT QUIET ON NAMIBIAN QUESTION, ONU REFERRED EMBOFFS TO DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND SECRETARY'S INITIATIVE, CLAIMING THAT ANSWER COULD NOT DOUBT BE FOUND IN WASHINGTON.

COMMENT: FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT, IT APPEARS THAT THE FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS CALLING THE TUNE AND THE OAU DOING ITS BEST TO KEEP IN STEP WITH THE MUSIC.

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